

# Two Sides of the Same Road

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One is a stubborn ten years old that believes to be much smarter than he is; the other is a quirky veteran that never managed to win a single League. After a chance encounter in Viridian Forest the two engage in an awkward student-mentor relationship, trying to walk together the road to be the best. [Story told in snippets in anachronic order. Image made by KiSsicchi on DeviantArt]

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# **Two Sides of the Same Road**

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# Matias and Travis

## 1. *Meeting Matias*

Travis was lost. Though, to his credit, Viridian Forest had a *very* convoluted geography. Or at least, that's what he kept telling himself.

The young kid passed a hand through his black hair as he reached the same dead end for the fourth time, groaning. His journey had just just started, but he had already met his match: his terrible sense of direction.

He gritted his teeth and tried scampering at his left, only to feel his arm pulled. He turned around, seeing a Bulbasaur shaking his head. He dragged the boy closer with a vine, while pointing the opposite direction with another.

Travis nodded with a smile. "Thanks, Bud."

Bud smiled proudly while he and his trainer took the opposite route. However, a loud *crack* made them stop, raising their guard.

"What was that?" Travis gulped, eyes darting everywhere while Bud readied his vines.

Another *crack*. Travis frowned, palming another Poké Ball.

"Prince, I need you." A male Nidoran materialized, and Travis pointed onward. "Something's coming."

Bud and Prince took a battle stance, ready to strike, Travis gulped, eyes on to order at any moment.

Then something him right on the face, and he fell down on the grass.

"Ow!" Travis yelled, raising back up. He rubbed his forehead and scowled, then grabbed what hit him, and blinked. It was a Quick Ball.

He then heard several steps running towards him, and turning around saw a smiling blond teen, around five years older than him, rushing his way towards him with an Hippopotas in tow. The moment he arrived and saw Travis, however, the smile disappeared.

"Oh, you are just another human." He pouted and kicked the ground. "Damn it, I was so sure it was here!"

Travis, Bud and Prince blinked. "Uhm, what?"

"The legendary Pokémon Virizion! I heard it had this forest as his home!"

"Virizion?" Travis tilted his head. "Never heard of it."

"What?" The teen widened his eyes, jaw dropping. "How can you not know one of the Swords of Justice? They are one of the most famous Unovan legends!"

"Uhm." Travis rubbed his cheek. "This is not Unova, it's Kanto."

"Kanto?" The teen blinked, scratching his hair and turning around. "Wait, so this isn't Pinwheel Forest?"

"I sure hope it isn't, because I thought I was in Viridian Forest." Travis shrugged.

The teen kept blinking, before producing a PokéNav. He stared at it for a few seconds before tossing it to the ground.

"Oh, come on! That salesman told me this Town Map was accurate!" He scowled, while the Hippopotas glared at it.

"Well, I'm sorry for you." He and his Pokémon tried walking past. "Now excuse me, I was going to Pewter-"

"Really?" The teen turned as well, smiling. "Mind if I tag along? I need to go back there and look into how to return to Unova now. Virizion is not gonna wait for me!"

Travis looked to Bud and Prince, both shrugging. He then sighed and turned towards the teen. "Sure, why not."

"Alright, then!" He smiled, thumping his chest. "My name is Matias, and he's Hip."

The Hippopotas raised a paw and gave a big, dopey smile, matching his trainer's.

Travis scratched his head again, nodding with his Pokémon. "Nice to know you, I guess."

"Same!" Matias beamed, before pointing onward. "Now, what are you waiting for? Lead the way, kid!"

Travis gulped, turning around and finding a three-way crossroads in front of them. That forest trip just got better every minute.

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## 2. Nicknames

"You named your Bulbasaur *Bud* ." Matias repeated, staring at him. Bud frowned and stepped away uncomfortably.

"Yes, so?" Travis placed his hands behind his neck. "What's wrong with it?"

"Nothing, it's just so..." Matias shrugged. "Generic, I guess?"

"Hey! I've spent hours thinking about it!" Travis scowled, grabbing Bud and showing his back. "He's male, and he has a bud on his back. It's perfect!"

"It's an awful pun wrapped in a generic name, you know?" Matias crossed his arms. "Not that your Nidoran is any better. The Pokémon that turns into a Nido *king* is called 'Prince'. How much did it take to find the name?"

"... Two hours, I was out of ideas." Travis turned the other way, blushing as he set down his Bulbasaur.

Matias shook his head repeatedly, "You should never give your Pokémons ill-conceived names. They are likely gonna keep those for the rest of their lives, they must be cool! Unique! Personal!"

"Like what?" He glared at the Hippopotas following them behind. "Didn't you call your Pokémons simply Hip?"

"That's the short version." Matias grinned. "His full name is HippoHorray!"

'HippoHorray' grinned as well, and trainer and Pokémons nodded at once. Travis just went pale, speechless.

Matias nodded, grin widening as he gestured wildly. "Can you feel the sheer celebration of victory of the name? The passion and drive it conveys? It's perfect, isn't it?"

"Yeeeeeah." Travis nodded slowly. "Yeah, it is, probably."

Travis and Bud paced slightly onward, gulping. Just a few trees from Pewter City, then they could've said those weirdos goodbye.

He hoped it was just a few trees, at least...

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### 3. Persistence

"That Onix is hax, I tell you!" Travis pouted, arms crossed and glaring at the ground. Bud mimicked him at the side. "He can't be this strong! We have the type advantage!"

Matias shrugged. "Type advantage isn't everything if you can't be strong enough to use it."

"Then we will get stronger!" Travis scowled, clenching his fists. "It's the only way!"

"Actually, it isn't." Matias put his arms akimbo. "Brock is not the only Gym Leader around, you know."

Travis and Bud raised an eyebrow in sync. Matias grabbed his PokéNav, opening the Map page.

"There's a Fairy-type Gym Leader that set up shop just a few towns away. If we go there-

"With that phony map of yours? No thanks." Travis shook his head. "I'd rather keep trying here."

"Actually, this is a legit map I downloaded in the Pokémon Center." He turned the Map around, now zoomed out to show every active Kanto Gym, pointing at the Fairy one. "See? It's just there. There's even a few other options if you don't want to try this: a Grass-type Gym Leader, a Water-type just next door, even a Normal-type if you want some kind of neutral challenge. There's everything you can ask for!"

Travis and Bud observed the map and all the options, before turning to each other. They frowned at once, and Travis shook his head once more.

"Nope." Travis sighed, raising a hand. "It *has* to be Brock, I will defeat him eventually. That's the only way that makes sense."

"Why exactly?" Matias cocked his head. "I mean, it's nice and all to be so driven, but at some point it just crosses into stupidity, and you're just a tiny bit over that edge now."

"None of your business." Travis grumbled, walking away with Bud. "I will be near Diglett Cave if you need me."

Matias scratched his head as he watched his student leave to train. He didn't know if he deserved praise or a lifeline now.

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#### 4. Coverage

"So, how many defeats are we at? Ten? Twelve?" Matias tossed the soda can at Travis, which caught it without turning.

"Seventeen." He sighed, taking a sip. "I took a few tries while you slept."

"You do realize that the more you fight Brock, the more he understands your strategies, right?"

"Then I will find a good, new strategy." Travis stared upwards, determined. "With Pokémons, possibilities are endless!"

"I'd usually love a nice boast like that, but really Travis," Matias sighed, looking at the Bulbasaur and Nidoran eating breakfast in the corner. "You have just two Pokémons, Bud and Prince. Both are Poison-types."

"And what's the problem?" Travis cocked his head.

"There's this little thing called 'coverage'." Matias raised a finger. "It means using Pokémons of varied types to be able to face any situation. Repeating types is a pretty bad choice for a trainer, unless you plan to train a monotype team, which has its pros and cons. If you keep repeating the same type unintentionally, you won't go far."

Travis folded his arms, frowning and listening. "So, you mean that I need different types to defeat Brock?"

"It might help, yes. Of course, given Brock uses Rock-types, you should-

"I already know what to do!" Travis grinned, opening his Pokédex and looking at the Pokémon Habitats. "I can get a Zubat in Mt. Moon, and a Weevile in Viridian Forest! They are Flying and Bug, so they'd help, right?"

Matias blinked. "Well sure, but-

"Alright!" He shoot upwards, arm raised. "Bud, Prince, we're going to catch new Pokémons!"

His two Pokémons turned and nodded, rushing after their trainer as they left the Pokémon Center.

Matias and Hip just started at the closing door before facing each other. "How do we tell him that he's going to fill his team of Poison-types?"

Hip shrugged, and Matias slouched on the sofa.

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## 5. *The final battle*

The day he met Matias still felt like yesterday. Travis found it hard to believe that seven years had passed, even with all the adventures and experiences they had shared throughout their partnership.

And now they were there, in the Indigo Plateau stadium, staring down each other on the opposite ends of the battlefield. Even when they entered the Conference together, they didn't expect *both* of them to make it this far.

"What a coincidence, eh?" Matias chuckled, rubbing his head. "Our first real chance to win a League, and we are in the finals together."

Travis shrugged. "So it seems."

They shared another glance, then each of them grabbed a Poké Ball in sync, turning serious.

"I've waited since I was little for this. I'm not gonna lose just to make you happy." Matias frowned.

"Good, I would've been offended if you did." Travis grinned. "And same goes to me."

"Heh." Matias tossed the Ball up and caught it. "May the best one win, then. The loser pays the restaurant later."

"Sure. I'd love a nice pizza and a drink."

"Cocky." Matias pointed the Ball onward. "We'll see how much it lasts."

The two shared another glance, and grinned. Neither of them could afford to lose now.

They threw their Poké Ball at once, and the League finals began.

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**A small idea that I decided to pursue today, at once a writing exercise and a way to write something between writer's block or simply wanting to try something different from time to time. Some of the inspirations of this story are the stories "Master, Pokémon?" by Saphroneth and "Sasha's Story: After the Ashes" (both stories I reccomend to read), which made me interested in trying out the snippet storytelling. While most of the snippets from now on will be in anachronic order, all the ones published in this chapter happen in the order they are published, with the last one being the end point of the story or close to it.**

**I hope you will enjoy it, and thanks to everyone that will read!**

# The Memories We Make

## 6. *Setting off - Travis*

Travis was jubilant as he finally left off his house, hearing his relatives still call 'Happy Birthday' and 'Good Luck' his way. He grumbled as he moved away: the only good thing about that party was having left it.

He took a deep breath and sprinted towards Oak's Laboratory, a big grin on his face. After forever, he was now ten and ready for his starter and trainer license.

Travis glanced at the old and boring surroundings, grinning. Finally, he would leave this dumb city of goody-two shoes behind and get some *real* excitement!

As a familiar laboratory came into view Travis braked, caught his breath and knocked on the door several times, almost decking the assistant that came over to open it. He just rushed inside without apologizing.

Professor Oak came in, holding a stash of papers. He smiled and raised a hand. "Oh, hey-"

"Nice to meet you Professor, I'm Travis!" He dashed past him, almost trampling Oak over. "I'm here for my Pokémon!"

Oak barely held onto his papers, placing them on a desk. He took a deep breath, turning to the grinning and fidgeting kid whose eyes were darting everywhere.

He blinked, clearing his throat and pointing to the desk behind him. "So, you have a choice of three Pokémon, and-"

"Bulbasaur!" Travis grabbed the leftmost Poké Ball on the desk, holding it up.

Professor Oak paused, looking at Travis's Ball and the remaining two. "Are you sure?"

"I've been sure for a long time." He held out his hand, frowning. "Now, Poké Balls and Pokédex, quick!"

Oak crossed his arms, quirking an eyebrow. "Hey, slow down kid. The League won't go anywhere."

"I can't afford to wait! I have to go!" Travis glared at him, clenching his hand around his Poké Ball.

Oak gave him a stern look, which Travis matched. He then sighed, raising his arms.

"Okay, okay, here they are." He grabbed five Poké Balls and a Pokédex, offering them to Travis.

"Thanks!" Travis beamed, stashing them in his backpack before turning around and waving. "See ya gramps!"

Professor Oak followed him with his eyes as he rushed out of the laboratory, shaking his head. He hoped reality wouldn't hit him too hard on the way out.

Travis kept grinning like an idiot as he ran across Pallet Town, almost running over several people and things as he thought about his Pokémon. He was just one Frenzy Plant away from dominating the entire Indigo League now!

He kept giggling and imagining his future curbstomps of every trainer of the region when he finally arrived to the slightly elevated, grassy fields of Route 1, the wind rustling its notable tall grass. He took a deep breath and enjoyed the sight for about half a second before tossing the Ball in the air, materializing his starter in front of him.

"Hey, there!" He offered a hand. "My name is Travis. We're gonna kick Kanto's ass together!"

The Bulbasaur smiled and nodded, shaking it firmly with a vine. Travis grinned once more, turning to the ledge-filled route ahead.

"Let's go, our first opponent will be Brock in Pewter City!" Travis raised his arms and warmed up his legs. "We've got less than two days to do that! You are Grass, so it should be easy!"

He sprinted off without a warning, startling Bulbasaur. He remained still and observed him, blinking a couple times.

Travis stopped, turning around and staring at his starter. "Hey, don't be a Slowpoke! I need you to fight, Bud!"

Hearing the name, Bulbasaur gave a puzzled look and glanced around before ultimately pointing at himself with a vine, head tilted.

Travis grinned, pointing at him. "That's your name. You're male and you have a flower bud, so you're Bud."

Bulbasaur blinked some more, then shrugged. Travis simply turned around, gesturing him to come closer.

"Come on, let's leave boredom central!" Travis dashed off once more, not even looking behind himself as he entered Route 1's tall grass.

The newly-named Bud observed his trainer for a while before sighing and trotting after him. Of course he had to get one of *those* trainers.

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## 7. Bud

Bud took pride in his starter Pokémon position. He was instructed and trained in every possible way to be ready for his duty, to grow and learn together.

He was probably the most qualified starter Pokémon in the world. Too bad learning with Pokémon should be a two-way street.

"Come on, why are you not moving?" Travis scowled, turning his way. "We have to go here! The map says it's the shortest way through the forest!"

Bud gave a terse look around: all the trees in the surrounding area were tilted slightly left, and that meant they took sunlight from that direction due to Mt. Moon striking a large shadow on the forest from the opposite way. As they entered Viridian Forest from the east, that meant the exit was westward. Travis wanted to go east.

Ergo his trainer was talking out of his butt, that map was dead wrong, or both. Most likely both.

He folded his vines and turned his head away, setting his feet firmly on the ground.

Travis grumbled, arms akimbo. "Don't be stubborn, we're already behind schedule! We can't waste time!"

After some consideration Bud sighed and followed, for he couldn't go against his trainer's wishes. Especially since he could just be recalled to his Poké Ball if Travis wanted.

As the duo progressed through the forest, Bud fixated on Travis. He had tried to keep an open mind about him until then, but he truly failed to impress him. And why was he even in such a rush, anyway?

He shook his head and focused on the road. It was probably better not to wonder about that stuff.

A loud *gasp* then grabbed his attention, turning to see Travis grinning.

"Look, a Pidgey!" He pointed to the bird Pokémon eating a Berry not far from them. "Time to get some experience! Bud, Vine Whip!"

Bud tried not to scowl. Vine Whip? Did he even *know* how type advantage worked?

He swallowed his protests and trotted up, swatting lightly at the Pidgey's wings. It turned its head up and glared, then went back to its food.

"You are stronger! Just whip it good on the back!" Travis yelled.

Bud tried to swat again, only for the Pidgey to duck away. He grumbled and focused, remember his orders. *On the back* .

Another attempted hit there, knowing one at the feet would knock him down. The Pidgey dodged.

A quick *snap* and repeat, when he could've thrown himself at it by swinging on a branch. He clipped Pidgey, and barely rolled away from its Peck.

Bud almost slipped the fourth time, but kept going with his repetitive task. He knocked Pidgey back, only for it to take flight and dive at him, missing only barely.

The two were locked in their quasi-stalemate for a while longer, Bud going on with his repetitive order and the Pidgey increasingly seeing through it, giving Bud quite a few Pecks for his efforts. They both started panting and locked onto each other, ready to end this.

"You've got this! Finish him!"

Bud knew what Travis meant, another Vine Whip. However, he didn't *word it that way* .

He grinned, turning around towards the perfect way to knock down the Pidgey. He slapped his vine towards a nearby tree, piercing it and sending it tumbling down. He smiled proudly and turned to Pidgey, looking at the fear in its eyes.

Then he saw it was pretty calm, and dread settled in. And when he heard the cracks and saw a shadow looming, it only increased.

He paled as he saw the tree ready to fall over him. He closed his eyes and waited for the end.

Bud felt someone grab him and roll on the ground, and then heard a *thud*.

Confused, Bud opened his eyes, seeing Travis' worried glance as he let him out of his arms, the tree right next to them.

"Are you hurt?" he asked, voice wavering.

After standing on shaky legs, Bud shook his head, ignoring the winces and groans he really wanted to vocalize.

"Thank goodness." Travis sighed, hand on his face. He then turned around, scowling. "Crud, that Pidgey left."

He glared at Bud. "Why did you stop whipping? You were almost done! Just a few hits and it wouldn't have been able to fly away!"

Bud widened his eyes, then turned downward. Travis grumbled, only to shake his head and focus again.

"Never mind, we'll catch something else later." He stood again, pointing ahead. "We gotta reach Pewter before night! Let's go!"

Bud kept looking after him, saying nothing. He then smiled and trotted past him, eyeing the path in the distance. It would be a difficult journey, but maybe it wouldn't be that bad.

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## 8. Geography

"So." Travis crossed his arms, turning from his bowl of cereal to Matias. "There's this thing I meant to ask."

"What is it?" Matias stopped munching on his cookies.

"How, exactly, did you get Unova and Kanto mixed up?" Travis squinted at him. "They are basically on opposite sides of the world."

Matias stared. He shifted sideways and seemed to think about it, then forced a smile.

"Yeah, about that." He rubbed his neck, avoiding eye contact. "I get regions mixed up all the time. Some of them are so similar it's hard to tell the difference."

"You had to *travel* to reach Kanto." Travis scowled. "That means you had to see where you were going."

"I fell asleep the whole trip." Matias shrugged. "Just like that time I visited Sootopolis in the Alola region."

"That's Hoenn."

"See? I've travelled in so many regions that I can't remember all of them exactly."

"It doesn't make *any* sense." Travis massaged his forehead, grumbling. "How can you *not* pay attention to stuff like this?"

Matias grinned, looking out of the window. "I just need a good place to crash, and then everything is alright. Just like that time I visited Prism Tower in Mauville City..."

"You are as dumb as a brick wall." Travis sighed, taking a spoon of cereals in his mouth.

"Said the guy who challenged Brock fifty times before winning."

Travis coughed on his breakfast, scowling. He blushed and turned away. "Touché."

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## 9. *Expectations*

Travis clenched his fists and took a deep breath, trying to analyze the situation.

The Greninja was racing around the battlefield, almost a blur to him and Bud. His Venusaur kept his flower ready to fire, feet firmly planted on the ground in spite of his injuries.

"Just give up, loser!" His opponent grinned. "You are so done for!"

Travis considered the situation some more, then flashed a grin of his own and stretched his fingers. "We've barely started here."

He and Bud shared a nod, then tracked the approaching Greninja.

After a few seconds, Travis pointed. "Frenzy Plant!"

Two stomps and giant roots tore the battlefield apart, zooming towards the Greninja. The Ninja Pokémon jumped away, speeding up once more as the roots followed him.

Bud remained still, observing and pounding the ground like a pianist, causing more roots to appear and join the chase from several directions: Greninja jumped, ran over, ducked under and deflected the roots as each tried to stab him, the distance between Greninja and Bud only increasing.

Travis followed Greninja's swift movements with interest and purpose, watching it stab a root with Cut and use the grip to jump higher, slicing one coming at his back with a Water Shuriken. It knew how to react and how to dodge quickly.

But he couldn't do both things at once.

He sharpened his glance as Greninja took to the air again, now framed by four tendrils.

Then, he shouted. "Leaf Storm!"

Bud aimed at Greninja and fired a flurry of leaves that flew towards the Water-type.

The trainer paled. "Double Team!"

Seven different Greninja appeared as the Leaf Storm hit, all seven of them zooming towards Bud.

Three stomps later, seven vines homed on each Greninja. They kept moving forward, even as the roots grabbed and destroyed the copies.

Soon only one remained, energy kunai ready to stab as it reached Bud. He brought up a root to defend, only for Greninja to slice through it.

It held the kunai and advanced, only for Bud to tap the ground.

A root sprouted right under Greninja, grabbing hold and keeping it airborne.

"No!" The trainer widened his eyes while Greninja struggled against the grip.

"Checkmate." Travis grinned, rising an arm. "Vine Whip!"

A large, long vine whipped through the air to Greninja; the hit connected, and Greninja tumbled to the ground, barely managing to move before its strength left it.

And after three seconds, the announcement came.

*"Greninja is unable to fight! The winner of the Global League Conference and new Pokémon World Champion is Travis!"*

A loud roar and a round of applause rang out from the stands as all the spectators chanted his name and whistled for him.

Travis beamed as he saw everyone cheering for him, with even Bud smiling back at him as he walked closer. From the seats he could also see *him* happy. He did it. He finally did it!

Travis raised his arms, jumping with joy. "Yes!"

Then his head hit something heavy and he cried out in pain. Travis rubbed the bruise while opening his eyes, looking around. Gone were the stadium, the crowd and Bud the Venusaur. He was in that stupid hotel room Matias insisted on taking, and Bud was still a Bulbasaur and sleeping in a corner with Prince.

Travis groaned, putting himself back inside the bed. From the nightstand, his hard-fought and barely earned Boulder Badge stared mockingly at him.

Fifty attempts. He had planned to beat Brock in one, two at worst, and as such his schedule left no room for error or diversions now. It would be almost impossible to make it in time.

He clenched his fists and frowned, turning the other way. Tomorrow, he *had* to get serious.

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## 10. *Reminiscence*

Matias yawned loudly and sat up. He shot a glance at the alarm clock, scowling at the '6 AM' on the display. *Woke up too early, again.*

He shrugged, rubbing the sleep out of his eyes and looking around the hotel room: it wasn't particularly fancy or comfy, but it was functional for a night and that was the important part. Too bad it took four hours to make Travis understand why a Pokémon trainer can't sustain sleeping in all the fancy hotels in the region even if they always won and battled a lot.

Matias chuckled, turning towards Travis. The boy was snoring soundly on his bed, wearing a huge dumb grin and moving around. His two Pokémons were sleeping at an angle, far more calmly than their trainer.

Amelie always told him that he slept that way too. And whenever he did, he kept going back to his one and only dream: winning a Pokémon League Conference and becoming a Champion. "It's the only thing that goes through your dumb skull," as she used to say.

He laughed briefly, thinking back to pleasant times as he rubbed Hip's head. All the days spent travelling with Amelie, all the nights spent without sleep to keep wild Pokémons at bay, and every single stupid fight for every petty reason.

He stopped petting his Hippopotas as less desirable memories came back as well. He clenched his fists and turned away, towards the Trainer card on the night stand. Instinctively he grabbed it, reading what he already knew well.

*Matias Duncan - Trainer ID: 01202012 - 0 Stars.*

Matias sighed as he tossed the card away, flopping back on the bed and staring at the ceiling. Five years and still nothing.

He eyed Travis once more as the kid turned the other way. He was younger than him, still filled with energy and desire to be the best.

Matias smiled: it might be too late for him, but Travis still had a chance. And as his mentor, he planned to make it a reality.

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**I hoped to be able to post the next chapter before my two weeks deadline, but between several real life issues and some problems with my writing I realized I ended up taking more than I wished to finish this set. I jumped over this idea before really planning it well, and as such the first snippets suffered from being as established or as polished as they should be. I plan to**

either move around some snippets or rewrite them to enhance the first chapter as soon as I have time to do so given failing the first chapter is a big issue for a writer and I want to improve this story as much as I can, same for all my other ones.

**Snippet number nine is inspired by the Ash VS Sawyer battle in the Lumiose Conference from the XY series, and it was my attempt to try writing a non-blow-by-blow fight. Hopefully I did a good job with it.**

**Fox McCloude:** I'm glad you liked the snippets, hopefully this set can be better than the first one. I've got quite a lot in store for the odd couple here.

**Farla:** I'm not going to change the way I capitalize Pokémon, sorry: given every piece of official media capitalizes Pokémon and species names, I don't see why I shouldn't follow suit. I have no issue with those who prefer not capitalizing them but I really don't think Pokémon's capitalization can be considered something to abide to, and saying otherwise in either extreme is pretty arrogant to be honest. I definitely worked on improving characterization in any case; I can agree that I did a poor job setting up Matias and Travis the previous chapter.

**Lebensmude:** Thanks a lot for your in-depth criticism, I agree with all of it and recognize my issues: I tried to fix all of them in this chapter, including giving a clearer focus on Travis and reducing drastically the conversation snippets for more plot driven ones (conversations will still be there once in a while, but serving more as sides than the main dish), alongside avoiding large time skips for the time being unless it serves the set it's part of. The part where Travis mentioned his adventures in the future snippet was meant to serve as a tease for the following ones more than an ending (though the snippet's title is misleading in this sense and I understand that), but if it feels way too much like telling I will try to find another way to convey the same feeling without running into the issue (plus making it less overwhelming, of course). For the snippet lengths, while I

would like to keep the segments somewhat short and sweet I do plan to give some specific, important moments full chapters alongside lengthening the snippets in general, as you probably saw with this chapter's first two, and hope this will help. I also really hope to be able to improve on grammar and sentence structure, and in general to flesh out the barebones skeleton of the story as much as I can.

I thank RandomificationChaotic for betaing this chapter.

Thanks to everyone for the reviews, and also for everyone who just read the story. Hope you all enjoyed this, and see you next chapter!